POEMS FROM AMERICA 1976

by P.E. Williams

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by P. E. WILLIAMS

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The poem Ice Cattle in a Meadow first appeared in *A Rainbow of Poetry*, and the poem Storm Clouds Over Tennessee appeared originally in *"Nitty Gritty"*.

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FOREWORD

Poems from America, 1976, was written with the idea that an individual could attempt to find out what it was like, and what one might see, between the ending of winter and the beginning of spring, in at least 48 different states.

In order to do this, I started, with my old faded blue car, driving up and down and crisscrossing the continental United States.

I traveled, in all, over 15,000 miles.

In most cases, I chose to drive the many sideroads of this country, but, at times, forced by the harsh tail end of winter, I also traveled a few interstate highways. I tried, as best I could, to stay away from the large cities, instead traveling through over a thousand different small towns. Wherever I wrote my poems, I made an effort to talk to and learn all I could from the local people. By doing this, I was able to describe more clearly and accurately the things that I saw and felt. The different people, through their kindliness and knowledge, made the completion of *Poems from America,* a reality.

This book should not be dedicated to one individual, but instead, to those who sponsored and helped set it up, and especially to all the different people throughout the 48 states who freely contributed their kindnesses and knowledge to me.

To all these nameless individuals, I always will be grateful. I only hope that I have done justice to them, in the writing of this book, *Poems from America, 1976.*

For my readers, I hope that you will enjoy reading some of these poems, as much as I have enjoyed writing them.

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CALIFORNIA

DANCING CROWS

Two black crows
having a ball in the Mohave Desert,
Kicking up the sagebrush,
Dodging the tumbleweeds,
Picking at old dead carcasses
Along the 20-mule trail.
A rattlesnake slithering along,
with a leery eye
Pointing to the crows.
Two black shadows fly past the sun--
And the rattlesnake's rattle is ready
for serious fun.
The dancing crows danced around his form,
But as fast as a silver spring!,
Two dead crows danced no more.

ALLIGATOR SKY

Alligator cloud in the sky
Trying to bite the world,
And make little boys cry.

The sun fell down;
And made the alligator cloud
Just the black sky.

ARIZONA

AWAKENING IN ARIZONA

Black shark clouds
cast against the sky,
Sagebrush lying still against the cocoa sands
that go on and on;
A little white coyote with big eyes
runs across the scene,
Black mountains lying
like dead men
for all eternity to see,
Square iron moutain tops
with a million different years to know,
Baby mountains, looking like ant hills
finally close the scene.

FLAGSTAFF

"I'm an Indian.....can you spare some change...?"

A thousand black valleys crisscrossed his face;
The faded thin blue coat he wore on that cold winter day;
Thin black shoes
that hugged the earth to catch its warmth;

I, the white man,
gave him change;
and went away feeling shame.

BRANDING IRON CAFE

Johnny A. had his problems,
And so did the poor black crow sitting on the snow
covered fence;
Harvy, the hard working Indian man--
the man who didn't speak,
and you knew why.
The fun talk about grandpapa and his marvelous
white lightning brew;
The bent over old cook,
carrying the two ice buckets back into his kitchen,
ready for more hard work;
The big friendly waitress, looking like a queen,
reading her daily horoscope,--
"Today's the day she will meet a dark
good-looking stranger,"
And you know,
by the big smile on her face,
Every stranger that comes in that day
will be made to feel like a king!

GRAND CANYON

What a sight!

What a sight!

One little river did all this.

What a sight!

What a sight!

It's incredible.

Greater than the Sphinx.

Three black hawks gliding

above the marble red floor.

The tourist commenting

"Quite a hole in the ground,"

And I just shook my head.

You look again,

and again,

and how can you believe

what a sight you're seeing.

It's incredible.

BENCH IN THE CANYON

Faded grey logs
where many a lover once sat,

'Debbie and Joe'
'Ted and Mary!
'T.D. & J.D.-'58'

'Diane + Pete - '38'
'Bob & Mary - 42'

All carved into the heart
of an old wood bench.

METEOR CRATER

to Bryan - the man just back from Viet Nam

Looking from the top of a windy rim,
what must have been;
20,000 years ago,
a giant fireball sped through deep black space;
Breaking through the frail thin earth's atmosphere,
Screaming with all its might,
A thousand atom bombs went off over the grey blue
/Arizona sky.
Now;
a gigantic iron hole,
with a million pieces of deep black space
buried deep in the earth's dark crust.

INSIDE THE CRATER

Deep
down
inside
the
crater.

At times, an eerie-like silence.
And then suddenly,
an invisible wind machine
is started up by an unknown hand,
and blows with all its might,
Always to remind you that you're not alone.

And then,
again,
Silence, silence rings the crater for a moment in time,

And you finally know,
that nature always claims its own.

THE ROCK SHOP

The weather-beaten woman.
    The one who just knew the CIA was under every rock;
Or, everytime a diesel truck roared by,
     they were shooting laser beams at her and her four
                                                /red cats;
    And the midnight germ warfare,
              practiced against her by the local Indians,
       so they could have her rocks, and the four red cats;
On and on she went.
    And the stacks of newspaper clippings
                        proved beyond a doubt,
       that the end was near
                  for others,
                     and herself,
                        and her four red cats.
Was she
     for real?
                yes.

NEW MEXICO

AN OLD LADY AND HER SHEEP

Under dark grey New Mexico skies,
an old lady with a red scarf
tended her sheep.
And away in the distance,
red pancake mountains with a million green raisins
stuck on their sides
stood quiet.
The shrill little cries of her baby lambs
could be heard across the cocoa floor,
as the brown and white sheepdog nipped at their heels.

She gave me a wave
before she disappeared on the cocoa trail.

SANTA FE

Coming into town from the south,
Black rain laden clouds hanging overhead,
while Beethoven plays away on the radio;
Black volcano hills that must be dead;
and yet,
white clouds hang on top;
And you'd think for sure
that Santa Fe will be no more.

A WHITE MAN'S TOWN

The end of the line.
All over but the shouting.
A one-way ticket to nowhere.
The Indians' last stand.

The white man's whisky and wine dull their pain
'til the beginning of the Great Hunt;
And maybe then, the Indian will truly be free
from the white man's civilized town.

NEW MEXICO SKY IN MARCH

White chariot clouds,
puffed up,
flying through the sky,
Grey ghost clouds,
high,
high in the sky,
Bluebird backdrop
peeking through,
as far as the eye can see,
Ice cone mountains,
with a million green raisins
stuck against their sides,
A lone blackbird
sitting on a fence,
looking into the sky.

PIG ON THE FREEWAY

Two young boys with sticks in hand
try with all their might
to get progress back on the beam,
An enraged motorist with his big limousine
honks with all his might
And two young boys become all the more frantic
to make progress right,
But the pig had the last laugh;
even when the big Mack hit him square in the eye
and he landed
on a big limousine.

A VISION 800 FEET UNDER THE GROUND

The snack bar restaurant 800 feet under the ground,
The twenty-first century future---restaurants, and
houses, and homes that my descendants, and their descendants
may be living in.
800 feet under the ground,
and all is not well.
The stench of the limestone and the mildew air.
The never ending hum of the machines.
God help the poor devils who may have to live there;
The restrained laughter,
the hollowness of the individuals who move around,
The old people feeling at home,
The willingness of the individuals to walk around
with walkie-talkies strapped to their necks,
always ready to take the next direction,
like good automatons.

THE COWBOY

Ten feet tall,
with a black Stetson hat
and his high black boots.
The long tan jaw
and the branded black eyes,
sunken in.
Shiny new jeans,
straight as an Indian's arrow.
A smoking white cigarette
hanging down from a thin
/short mouth.
---The walk of a cowboy god
that we poor mortals can only dream of.

TEXAS

TEXAS ¸COUNTRYSIDE

Cattle.
    Big, bigger, and still bigger.
Stench.
    It has to be the biggest.
Texas, the land of bulls.
    Not small bulls, the biggest.
        You've seen one bull, and you've seen enough.
Tall skyscrapers full to the brim with cattle feed,
     crisscross not across a 'state',
         but across a 'nation'.
Prairie dogs, big as calves, bark no more
  as glass and mason skyscrapers take over the prairie.
Black oil leaving the gold fields
          faster than Sam Houston's draw.
The Alamo - an Arab prince's delight.
What more can I say---
  Concrete trailways put an end to the Texas cattle trail.

OKLAHOMA

OKLAHOMA TREES IN MARCH

Grey whiskers sticking out of a yellow field,
And underneath, cocoa soil spread like honey.
Faded brown leaves, crisp as ice,
lie still,
Open grey spiderweb trees
cast against the sky,
and yet,
friendly enough to catch my eye.
Bushy-tail trees pointing to the sky
and the leaves have gone by,
Small evergreens with rusty fingers,
pointing to the Promised Land,
which is the Oklahoma sky.

THE HOUSE THAT DIDN'T DIE

Under Oklahoma skies,
leans an old grey house.
Many a tornado has been by its door
and has taken its toll,
And yet this one old house still leans against the sky.
Nobody can tell what happened to the folks
that lived in that old house,
But everybody that drives on Highway 35
knows
there is an old house that still leans
against the sky.

KANSAS

KANSAS BACKROAD

Three dogs in the road.
"Who in the hell are you?"
The brown wienie dog with a grin,
The Kansas poodle with his fluffy wool, dirty and all,
The chestnut hunting dog with a bent tail,
I, in my faded blue car.
The stand-off --
Their road, and my time.
The honking horn,
the ringing in my ears,
and still a stand-off.
The obscene language,
and just then the evangelist walks by.
My
time
runs
out,
and I back up,
and three dogs are left looking fine.

KANSAS IN MARCH

Snow-covered land - miles all around,
looking like a salt sea, and yet
no ships travelling across the land.
Naked telephone poles looking out of place,
A green tractor cast against the sea
waiting for the planting to begin,
The aluminum windmill staring, like an eye, at the sea.
Hungry birds sitting high among the barren grey trees,
and then,
the never ending snake-like flight
of the fledglings looking for food.

UNINVITED GUESTS

Corn husks in the snowfield,
and a few black crows just hanging around,

Sweet Lassie's Feedstore, across the road,
won't give them a hand,
But farmer Johnson, comin' down the lane with shotgun in hand,
might give them a bang.

THE ABANDONED HOUSE ON THE BIG FARM

Now just a grey shell---
The windows are gone,
The front door lays on its side,
The back porch has fallen down.
Prosperity bought the shiny new house,
and they made sure that the empty old house
was out of sight.
The only friends the house has,
are three small boys that play inside its heart,
But,
there's always the stern voice, telling the boys --
"Don't play in the broken-down house! You want to get killed?!"
Now,
on cold March nights and the sky is grey,
An old abandoned house
can be heard crying against the wind.

MISSOURI

MISSOURI IN MARCH

Puffed up skies,
Bluebird blue peeking through,
Bumpy white snow,
and stumpy cornstalks coming through,
Grey alligator bark trees
cast against the snow.
Smoky tall trees
burnt against the Missouri sky,
Hunchback cattle,
cinder black and vanilla white,
nipping ice crystal hay on the white marble floor,
Town after town,
dirty white snow
stacked up along cold grey roads,

Flocks of blackbirds,
going from one cornfield to another,
and always flying away mad.

ARKANSAS

PROGRESS IN ARKANSAS

Giant shopping center
high atop a rocky hill;
The smell of gasoline,
The quick movement of the shoppers,
The honking of the horns.
And at the bottom of the hill;
A dried-up stream,
and two abandoned old homes.
The few remaining birch trees are still hanging on.
But no more possums.
No more water moccasins.
No more squirrels.
No more slow-moving people.
No more the smell of sorghum
drifting through the evening air.
Just one place in Arkansas.
Let's hope there won't be many more.

A GOOD MAN

The town fool,
in the red beanie hat;
Three yellow-stained teeth
always looking like a grin.
As loud as they come,
he chattered away,
And most that knew him,
looked the other way;
I, the stranger,
came into that small town on a grey stormy day--
The snow was falling fast,
and the roads were like tinted glass,
I had me a coffee,
and left to leave;
A town fool ran to my side,
and warned me of the dangers
that might pass my side;
He gave me a blessing
for a safe journey home.
The town gentleman went his way.
Now, on cold grey days, and the snow may fall,
I think of a good man
in Arkansas.

ICE CATTLE IN A MEADOW

On an early March morning in the Ozark mountains,
Stood a broken row
of cinder black and vanilla white
statue-like cattle,
Hazy fog,
oozing from the cattle,
made the cold morning seem colder than it was,
The frosty sun rose in the east;
and sparkling hands reached out from the sun's breast
and touched the tip of the meadow,
But even then,
the statues never left their place.
Only when the broken-down feed truck
crackled through the meadow,
did the statues come alive.

LOUISIANA

TREEHOUSE IN THE SCRAPYARD

An old magnolia tree in the scrapyard,
The treehouse made of
weatherbeaten aluminum sheets,
A rickety brown ladder
leans against the tree.
Worn out Pontiacs,
Dodges, De Sotos, Fords,
surround the tree,
Empty shells resting in peace.
Two small boys,
no bigger than a lumberjack's arm,
scurry over the old wrecks,
and like loggers,
shoot up the old tree.
The creaking and the scraping
from inside of their house,
would turn a strong stranger pale,
But boys must have fun
in a treehouse
in the old scrapyard.

LOUISIANA SWAMP

Drooping spiderweb trees, all furry and grey,
lie quiet,
as the muddy grey water slurps against their sides,
The occasional shrill sounds of the wild birds
pierce across the swamp,
Magnolia trees, with weatherbeaten trunks,
standing like water giants
guarding the bones of swamp creatures from years gone by,
Silver grey crocodiles with dull big eyes,
making small ripples as they glide silently
through the swamp looking for prey,
Nature never ending
in a Louisiana swamp.

MISSISSIPPI

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER SEEN FROM A VICKSBURG HILL

Vast.
Silent.
Yet the constant churning
of dirty brown water
always moving forward;
Silent souls, now gone by,
met their fate
when the river turned mad;
Many a boat was swallowed down her throat,
and some still lie
in her watery heart;
Frail tan banks
line her sides,
Always ready to give her more room;
A sweeping bend in her side
lets you know
She'll run her own course;
Mississippi river boats
run no more.
And now,
on a cold grey Vicksburg day,
I can only dream
what used to be,
on the always moving
Mississippi River.

SUNRISE IN MISSISSIPPI

Orange circle
rising from the East,
as flat as the side of tinted glass,
The orange beacon
that gets brighter, and brighter
as darkness slips away,
Pink-blue, with puffy white streaks,
surround its form,
A lone red cardinal
flies into the sun,
to have some fun.

ALABAMA

BLACK CROW ON THE FREEWAY

A lone black crow,
madder than hell,
telling progress where to go,
Intruders roar by,
pay no heed,
and yet you know,
there's an Alabama crow,
still telling progress where to go.

MURDER CREEK IN ALABAMA

An eerie name--
An eerie creek.
Dense green pines, dogwood trees,
grow along its side.
Most local folks only know that its called
'Murder Creek'.
They don't know why,
and don't really care,
But I wonder
why it got its name.
What poor soul or souls
were murdered in its muddy waters?
What fiend helped cause the name?
I haven't any answers,
But I know one thing---
The dark shadows
are starting to fall fast
on Murder Creek.
And I'm moving on.

TENNESSEE

STORM CLOUDS OVER TENNESSEE

Pregnant dark clouds
just waiting for the birth of a big storm,
While below,
a bowling green mountain
is dotted with cinder black and chestnut brown cattle
not concerned about the watery birth;
Hill after hill,
with smoky barren trees
pointing to the skies like magnets,
ready to capture the birth of the storm;
The flight of the birds
as the birth is near;
The moist air hanging still;
While just a few feet above,
the wind grows stronger, and stronger,
ready to spread the birth
across the Tennessee land.

ABANDONED

Rusty tin barns,
left on green hills,
lean against the sky,
Skeleton grey houses
cast against the Tennessee sky.
Concrete progress,
running through their front yards
running through their backyards,
took its toll.
Now the smell of gasoline and diesel fuel
settles along the lifeless meadows.
No more livestock,
no more people,
in the abandoned old tin rusty barns
and skeleton grey houses,
along a concrete highway
heading into the sky.

KENTUCKY

DRILLING FOR WATER IN MARCH

A silent
rusty red
drilling rig
lies in the center of a cornfield in Kentucky,
Lifeless cornstalks lie dormant in the chocolate
brown earth,
Two tired men,
wearing railroad engineer hats and blue
denim coveralls,
are having a break,
Full black waterclouds,
hanging overhead,
are ready to create plenty of mud on the land.
A lone black crow,
sitting on the fence,
taking in the scene,
must be thinking
of a big
corn harvest
dream.

KENTUCKY KITTY

A grey and white kentucky Mountain kitty
started to walk across the road,
Big red trucks,
big blue trucks,
loaded with cinder black coal,
slowed down, as she
majestically crossed the road,
After all,
she <u>is</u> a Kentucky Mountain
Kitty!

A RETURN TO EAST BERNSTADT, KENTUCKY

A small town in the Kentucky hills,--
The smell of coal dust,
The smoky grey trees, fluffy with coal,
The tan green meadows,
The orange coal cars loaded to the top,
The one main street - 3 blocks long.
The chestnut cattle in a small corral,
The cattails along the highway,
covered with coal dust, and swaying in the wind.
The best thing of all--
the still friendly people
that befriended a hungry young boy,
22 years ago.

KENTUCKY COAL HILLS

The early morning fog
rising from the hills;
--like driving through Dante's inferno.
The endless trek
of blue and red trucks belching out black smoke,
carrying cinder black coal out of the hills.
The smoky barren trees, fluffy with coal dust.
The rusty brown hillsides.
But always peeking through---
layer after layer of cinder black coal.
The countless houses stuck against the hills,
with smokestacks spitting out grey smoke,--
adding to Dante's inferno.
The small groups of men
with yellow hats and faded workpants
coughing up a foggy mist
on a cold March morning in the
Kentucky coal hills.

DEVIL'S HIGHWAY AND GARBAGE HEAP

Driving on Highway 421--
the road made for driving in hell.
Two small lanes with broken holes,
zigzagging through the coal hills of Kentucky,
Big blue and red diesel trucks,
heavily loaded with cinder black coal,
driving along at hell-breaking speed,
for the coal companies who want to take out
more coal,
Beautiful Kentucky hills losing their beauty along
the "devil's highway",
as mile after mile
lie hulls of abandoned cars,
and garbage heaps at every nook along the road.
---A sad price to pay for progress in old Kentucky,
if it means there will have to be more
devil's highways
and garbage heaps
in the Kentucky hills.

VIRGINIA

PONY IN THE VIRGINIA HILLS

A cream-chocolate pony
at the bottom of a rocky Virginia hill,
All fluffed up,
on an early March morning,
Misty steam rising
from his tiny form,
A small boy eyeing him
from the grey house.
The little pony
pretending he doesn't notice,
But always turning his head to see
if his friend
is still there.

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS

Puffed up
grey
clouds
hang over the mountains,
Not one
mountain,
but many mountains.
Grey smoke
always seems to be rising from the mountains---
An eerie sight.
Barren
charcoal-colored trees
sticking out
of the moutains' sides.
The Appalachian mountains,---
Like a giant
porcupine,
breathing smoke from all its pores,
On a cold
March
morning.

AN OLD VIRGINIA SUNRISE IN MARCH

Old horse barns,
standing out like they were new,
Green, rolling pastures, with a touch of rust and orange,
Black skeleton trees, cast against
a pinkish red sky with a bluebird top,
And finally---
like a magic eye!
A flaming brilliant sparkling red sun
comes up over the Virginia sky.

NORTH CAROLINA

A NORTH CAROLINA MULE

A shiny poker-black mule, with a chestnut belly,
stands as still
as a rabbit caught in a tobacco field,
Even when heavy raindrops
bounce off the silent mule's back.
Watery dark eyes
glisten in the rain,
but never move a muscle.
Legs, as firm
as a blacksmith's arm,
stand their ground,
On the side of a North Carolina hill.

THE LADY AND HER QUILTS

On a side road in North Carolina,
there's an old lady with reddish grey hair, with a tan face,
And in her face,
you can see countless lines, made from pain.
She makes beautiful quilts,
and puts them on an old clothesline in front of her /humble house,
She has a small little sign that says they're for sale.
But the motorists usually just speed by.

The real story is not about an old lady selling quilts /to survive,
But the story that she told, over a warm cup of coffee,
about a young boy, named Buddy, at the airport in Viet Nam.

All ready to leave, --served his time--,
the letter sent the week before,
about how happy he was to be coming home.
Only he never came home.

The impatient comrade, in the airport lounge, went berserk,
And shot up the place.
Three dead Marines.

Two telegrams telling of regret.

But her life must go on,--
As a kind old lady shows me another quilt.

SOUTH CAROLINA

RAIN CLOUDS OVER SOUTH CAROLINA

Black
grey
puffy clouds linger overhead,
and yet,
like at the end of a tunnel,
White-blue rays, mixed with pink,
give hope for another day of sunshine ahead.
Smoky barren trees
reach out to the rainclouds,
hoping to taste fresh water to last through the spring,
Cocoa hills,
showing their faces underneath the smoky trees,
wait silently to take the leftover water
from the
trees.

A PLANTATION HOUSE IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Danger!
Keep out!
An old abandoned house, on a South Carolina backroad.
Three stories high--
broken windows,
faded boards creaking in the wind,
bits of a faded pink roof blowing in the breeze,
a faded red chimney still stands tall,
tall brown weeds surround the old house
trying to cover up the past,
a giant magnolia tree standing next to the old house
like a sentinel still guarding what must have been.
No one can tell, around these parts, the true story
of the old house,
No one knows whoever loved there,
No one knows why the house was abandoned,
No one knows
whatever happened
to the folks that lived
in that majestic plantation house
on a backroad in South Carolina.

GEORGIA

SUNRISE IN GEORGIA

Pink-orange rising from the East,
while a faded blue sky looks down,
    Majestic magnolias
    standing tall amongst sleepy little towns,
Rusty leaves, lying on their sides,
making small towns look clean,
    Green rusty fields
    rolling across the Georgia countryside,
Chocolate-brown cottonfields
with tiny marshmallows blowing in the wind,
    All this
    makes a Georgia sunrise
    worth to see.

GEORGIA SWAMP

In the early afternoon,
chocolate-brown muddy waters are slurping against
the barren grey pine trees,
The eerie sounds of faceless creatures
vibrate across the swamp,
And the clattering of wings,
and cracking of mildew branches---
when startled by a mortal enemy---man.
Catfish making chocolate bubbles
as they swim in the swamp.
And now the end of the day,
and dark shadows
start swallowing up the swamp.
A quiet silence,
spreading by the minute,
lets me know
its time to leave a Georgia swamp.

THE FAMILY REUNION

The Cordele cemetery.
10 blocks long, 10 blocks wide.
Walking up and down the soggy lanes,
looking for Grandpa Williams and Grandma Williams,
The endless search on a warm Georgia afternoon.
Always the wrong Williams;
Always the feeling of a pilgrimage,
made with honor and respect,
made in vain.
Broken grave tops
bursting forth with life--
with dandelions, weeds, and grass.
Time takes its toll,
The day runs out,
Heading back toward the highway.
When right before my feet,---
The Williams folks, now gone by
say a last farewell.

FLORIDA

SUNRISE IN FLORIDA

Shoulder-high mist
lingers across the landscape,
As the rising yellow sun spreads its arms
over a light blue Florida sky,
Tall charcoal-black spiderweb trees stand like sentinels
as the early morning mist
hangs amongst their furry fingertips,
Cool, green waterponds lie quietly,
waiting for the sun to give new life
under a Florida sky.

MARYLAND

ABANDONED BARNS IN MARYLAND

Empty casings,
With frail weatherbeaten wood blowing in the wind,
Rusty sheets of metal stamped against their tops,
Vines, like spiders, climbing up their sides,
One can only guess
what stories of history
each barn could tell.

GAVE HIM A TOOT

A little
grey and white squirrel
on a Maryland highway
Was having some fun.
I, in my faded blue car,
was coming down his road.
I gave him a toot.
He raised his tail,
and left,
Madder than hell.

DELAWARE

A BIRDHOUSE IN DELAWARE

A miniature,
3-story,
red and white apartment house,
standing high atop a shiny wood pole,
Just waiting for the martin birds from Brazil
to send out scouts, checking the accomodations for
/the summer.
And then, the English sparrows and the starlings
are always looking for free lodgings for the winter.
Or, the red cardinals, the blue jays, and grackles
are making sure their residence is just right
for the summer scene.

THE ABANDONED LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE

A little red brick schoolhouse,
with a lightning rod on its top,
stands silently in a weed-covered field.
Broken windows, and cracked brick along its sides,
lets you know
that it's lost its heart.
No more little boys and girls yelling and shouting,
or dancing on its front step,
No more "human-learning" in its single two rooms.
Now, only the occasional chirping
of the birds in the dense undergrowth.

Progress can't sit still;
and yet,
what's wrong with learning in a little red
schoolhouse in Delaware?

PENNSYLVANIA

PENNSYLVANIA STONE HOUSE

Abandoned,
crumbling,
yellowish-grey
old stone house,
in a green, rolling meadow.
Ghostlike fingers--
time-aged vines--
smother the old stone house,
Tall, tall, porcupine-like trees
stand motionless on all four sides.
The cold wind
breathes
through the old stone house,
And the different birds dart in and out,
On an early March day.

A SIDEROAD IN PENNSYLVANIA

Smoky white clouds,
hanging over head,
against
a puffy blue face,
The big red sun,
hiding behind a cloud mist,
but always
being seen,
Birch trees,
taking on strange shadows --
looking like they were painted - with silver tops
and charcoal bottoms,
The setting sun,
going to bed,
And now,
the old birch trees
Just looking barren, and grey.

NEW JERSEY

AN OLD RED MILL IN NEW JERSEY

The old grain mill
has a tale to tell---
The tale of the workers
who put in long hours
day after day;
Men tired.
Men swearing, and arguing with one another.
Men being human.
Their countless trips
to a local pub,
And having bottle
after bottle
of foamy ale,
The rantings and the ravings
of the mill owners--
puritans, at their best.
Now, the old mill
is just a silent museum,
with a water wheel
turning a little bit slower
each
day.

A RAINY DAY SOMEWHERE IN NEW JERSEY

Scuffy-brown rolling hills,
Black skeleton trees,
looking like sagebrush from the distance,
Flat greyish-black rain clouds moving north.
Small raindrops with grey corners
smashing against thin glass,
Brick houses looking clean and wearing shiny new tops,
as rain washes away chocolate-brown dust.
A cold, crisp, crackling feeling in the air,
gives one a good appetite
for a
New Jersey
day.

NEW YORK

NATURE TOUCHING TWO BIG MEN

Two fluffy white-and-grey deer
lie dead side by side
on a sideroad in New York,
Two big oil trucks, a faded red, and a faded blue,
stand still.
Two burly-looking oil drivers
stand over
the now dead deer,
Hard-like features on both men
make mourners' masks seem strange.
The bigger man of the two, with
big pink ham-like hands,
bends down, and
picks up a lifeless little paw,
And just shakes his head.

Two burly men,
climb aboard their rigs,
and drive slowly
away,

And all that is left to tell,
is two lifeless deer
left on a
New York sideroad.

ALONG THE BANKS OF THE HUDSON RIVER

Marble-top green river,
Quiet as a feather brushing against a glass pane.
Hemlock, white pine, black skeleton trees
on an early March morning,
Standing like sentinels on the rocky
hills of the Hudson River.
Looking across the river---
An artist's landscape reflecting off a shiny
green canvas,
Puffed-up grey clouds
standing still overhead.
Making the whole
view
like a lithographer's plate.

VERMONT

STORM CLOUDS BLOWING OVER VERMONT

Puffy-grey waterbuckets
ready to feed rolling tan-brown hills,
Marble mountains,
with barren, purple-grey trees stuck against
their sides,
waiting patiently for
oval drops of rain.

White and silver birch trees,
looking like bleached skeletons,
needing a good bath,

Bumpy, grey-ash stone fences,
crisscrossing across dry meadows and hills.

Just one tiny view
of majestic
Vermont.

MISCHIEVOUS LADY

A cold and windy day in March,
grey overcast, outside.
And in the warm restaurant,
people are paying no heed, until
The lady from Vermont says
"Snow clouds overhead!"
All turn to look,
and the lady from Vermont, with curly brown
hair and a fine smile,
has a good laugh on all of us.
"After all," she says, "she's only
kidding!"
A sigh is heard from all.
And a lady from Vermont
with a beautiful smile
leaves us
in peace.

SCHOOL BOY IN VERMONT

On a sideroad in Vermont,
snowflakes, looking like white confetti,
blow across the hazy
white landscape,
A little boy, with a blue wool cap and a puffy red sweater,
waits patiently
for the schoolbus;
As the weather turns colder,
and the snow falls harder,
A little boy from Vermont
hugs his school books and his
silver lunchpail
with all his might.
Down the snow-covered road, between snowflakes,
a hazy yellow blur can be seen coming,
Bright and glistening yellow and red lights
bring the schoolbus to a stop,
And a shivering little boy climbs aboard,
to get more learning
in Vermont.

WOOD BRIDGE OVER A CREEK

Looking
like a long, long, thin woodshed,
Faded grey wood on the outside,
Long 4 x 4 ribs
making up a skeleton structure, inside.
Sloping roof,
like a ski run on a steep Vermont hill,
The warning sign - 18,000 lbs, and no more!,
The driving on the bridge - like driving
through a twilight tunnel,
The rattling of the boards,
The uneasiness of the car,
And then!
the bursting forth of light --
And you still know,
that you're safe
in old Vermont.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

A TWO-STORY BARN IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

On a sideroad,
An old faded red wooden barn,
over 100 years old,
Rusty sheets of metal covering it's top
And appearing majestically against a
New Hampshire grey sky,
a green cupola, with thin green shutters.
Snowflakes, being blown against an old greenish
weathervane with a cow on top,
cause quite a sight.
At the bottom floor of the old barn --
Row after row
of faded Dutch broken window panes,
Stacks of old birch kindling
lean against it's side.

And the barn from a distance --
looking like a Mississippi steam boat --

Now lifeless,
and dark inside.

MAINE

THE COAST OF MAINE IN MARCH

An eerie, heavy, ice-cold wind,
blowing overhead, along the rocky coast,
Low tide,
and thousands of white and grey seagulls
are having a March afternoon feast
Looking out to sea --
a blue green sea platter,
with chips on its face,
is coming
slowly in.
The wind dies down,
and then, a strange silence one must bear.
And just as suddenly,
one finds himself
trapped in a wind tunnel,
with a howling, bruising,
ice-cold wind.

A BIG MAPLE TREE AGAINST A SUNSET

Huge black arms
reaching out across the sky,
looking like a phantom
against a setting of pink and grey,
Darkish grey clouds
hanging over head,
And just below,
splotches of pink,
blending into an orange-ribbon sunset,
in Maine.

A PERSONAL CRISIS IN MAINE

Sun shining brightly,
with a sharp and clear
egg-blue background.
The temperature cold,
colder,
and colder still.
The temperature falling fast.
My faded blue car --
no match for nature.
The timing chain, and the crank shaft
snapping like glass
as the weather turns colder.
Could be
the end of my dream,--
The writing of my book, Poems from America, 1976 --.
Could be a harsh ending
after such a long journey,
Me traveling up and down,
crissrossing states,
driving on the sideroads,
--the cheap motels,
the skimpy meals,
the rain,
the snow,
And now --
My faded blue
protector,
friend,
and loved one, -- Stands still.

THE END OF AN OLD FRIEND IN MAINE

Not a human,
Nothing famous.
Just an old faded blue car.

Inside the mechanic's shop,
they had her open
for all to see.
Her aluminum head,
lying on the greasy steel workbench,
And the shiny blue drive shaft,
broken in three places,
The long thin crack in her block.
The green Quaker Oil,
oozing out of her side,
and out of her springs,
The aluminum pistons,
charred, and cracked on their sides.

She's only a car,
you might say,
But you didn't know her,
like I did,---
She, taking me up and down the Kentucky hills,
On the icy roads of the Ozark Mountains.
Through the Mississippi swamps,
Through the winding sideroads in Kansas,
Over the long stretches of New Mexico.
Through the Arizona mountains,
And the California deserts,
And many places
more.
Never failing me.

Just getting one poet
from one place to another
to write
what he sees.

MASSACHUSETTS

A MARCH MOON IN MASSACHUSETTS

A
yellow
glass
drop,
with grey smudges
on its face.

Purple-blue
backdrop,
with a yellowish sheen
spreading across its form.

And seeing the moon
through a tall, grey birch tree --
One glimpsing long, thin fingers
holding a yellow ornament
by
a
fingertip.

DRIVING THROUGH SMALL VILLAGES IN MASSACHUSETTS

Running grey stone fences,
Red, white, and green Cape Cod houses,
with ski-slope roofs,
Miniature forests
of March grey birch trees,
looking naked
and obscene,
Open-door cemeteries, by the sideroads,---
Like beacons, ---
Letting one know
that life
is only a few short miles
to the next cemetery
in Massachusetts.

RHODE ISLAND

CHIMNEYS IN RHODE ISLAND

On big houses,
On little houses,---

Long, thin, red brick chimneys,
Little short chimneys with lips,
on the tops of green roofs,
Double chimneys - one on top of the other -
made of pink brick and white mortar,
Triple, red brick chimneys,
on some houses,
Fat chimneys, with red brick,
climbing up the sides of 2-story houses,
Long, square chimneys,
with grey vines snug against their sides,
Jagged, grey stone chimneys
stuck against old grey houses.

The never ending chimneys
across the countryside,
Let you know
you're in Rhode Island, for sure.

RHODE ISLAND TREES IN MARCH

Big tall birch,
barren and grey;
Rocky little fences,
running in their midst.
Brown, crisp leaves,
lying like a brown carpet,
amongst the trees,
Jagged grey rocks,
peeking out of the tan brown carpet.
The evergreens,
all curly and green,
looking out of place amongst the birch trees.

Looking from a distance---
A giant
grey
porcupine,
sitting on Rhode Island.

CONNECTICUT

A FEAST IN CONNECTICUT

Blackbirds,
geese,
starlings,
All under maple trees,
having a feast.

Tiny droppings of maple sap,
making blotches
on a green-brown carpet.

Fat and sweet
birds
fly away
glad.

THE TREEHOUSE IN CONNECTICUT

A big, maple tree,
with giant protective grey arms,
Reaches out with its heart.
Weather-beaten grey boards,
and a little glass window,
and a rusty tin roof
Sit on one of it's arms.
A crooked grey ladder leans against it's heart.
A little blonde beauty,
with a warm red scarf,
Scampers up it's sides,
And sitting on the top of Connecticut,
the little beauty
Smiles down,
like a queen.

THE MAN FROM CONNECTICUT

The big, fast super highway -
with big black signs - 50 MPH.

He, and his used pontiac,
driving 49 1/2.

Big aluminum diesel trucks,
with smokestacks spitting out smoke,
riding on his tail.
Their lights blinking
And their horns blaring.
Passing motorists,
doing hell only knows,
and giving him dirty looks, as they buzz by,

Down the line,
standing still, on the side of the road,---
two egg-blue Connecticut State Police cars---

And suddenly --
Law-abiding motorists,
and big diesel trucks
Are all doing
49 1/2,
On the big
fast
super highway.

WEST VIRGINIA

APRIL VIEW IN WEST VIRGINIA

Light blue smoke,
rising like a hawk,
From a bonfire,
The crackling of birch limbs,
as the wind picks up speed,
A red glow,
Hiding beneath white ash.

On a sideroad,
a vanilla-brown heifer
wandering around aimlessly,
And some poor farmer
may not even know.

Looking from a distance,
and standing out clear,--
Charcoal-black birch trees,
With silver tips swaying in the air.

Chocolate-brown cornfields,--
With row after row
of smashed cornstalks, lying on their sides.

Tall, bushy amber weeds,
blowing gently,
along the roadways,
and against the hills.

The rolling rusty-green hills and meadows,--
With light-bluish jagged rocks,
coming through.

And an old grey barn,
with broken shingles on it's top,
Still looking majestic
Next to a green agate pond.

WHITE CHURCH ON THE HILL

Small white church,
with a long thin steeple,
Sits peacefully against a raincloud sky
in West Virginia.
In the back of the church,
a small cemetery,--
With row after row of silent markers,
telling of souls gone by,
A fresh-dug cocoa-colored grave
Leaves an Indian mound
on it's top.
Giant birch trees,
with blotches of silver,
and charcoal trunks,
Are spreading their arms
around an old cemetery
and the little white church
on the hill.

STATUES IN WEST VIRGINIA

Cinder-black, with white masks,
Chestnut-brown, with white masks.
Cattle.
Standing like statues,
against a green, green hillside
with patches of rusty green grass.
The rain slowly
spreading across the meadow.

From up close,
cinder-black and chestnut-brown,
Looking all shiny and smooth
and patted down.
Cattle muscles
must be made from black and brown marble.
Even when
tiny crystal raindrops
become bigger,
and look like foggy globes,
Cattle statues
Never move.

OHIO

ON THE BANKS OF the OHIO RIVER

A little green and white tugboat,
with its nose against giant barges,
Pushes, with all its might, upstream,
making foamy, white and brown dragon-waves from its stern.

The massive barges, loaded with tons
of cinder black coal
looking like ancient
black mummies, resting in peace.

The Ohio River --
a brownish-green,
with a million ripples
moving at an endless pace.

One walking along its banks --
feeling and seeing
its soggy, mushy dark brown soil,

And looking across the river,--
giant birch trees,
with roots
like big strong fingers,
hug the shallow banks.

And high water marks
on the old
Birch trees,
Let you know
that the Ohio
is just sleeping away time.

AN OHIO SKY IN APRIL

A balmy day.
Tiny snowflakes
falling,
And then exploding against the earth.
Puffy full
white-grey clouds
Rising from the horizon,
with a misty light-blue backdrop
peeking through.
Traces of white-orange
reflecting
through the clouds.
A steady wind,
rising from the West,
Soon closes out
a gentle picture
of an Ohio sky.

MICHIGAN

FARMS IN MICHIGAN

Farms,
farms,
and more farms.
Red, Purple, White, and Green barns.
Big silos.
All colors and shapes;
Whites, red brick, and brilliant tans.
Corn cribs--
Red and black painted
wire cages,
Looking like birdcages
from a Michigan state zoo.
Blocks of rusty yellow hay,
Stacked in aluminum sheds.
Little faded green lawns,
around the family homestead, with
barren grey birch trees
looking like Christmas ornaments,
on an April day.
Across the roads--
Dark, sandy-brown cornfields,
with tiny cornstalks
sticking out of the turned-over earth.
And in the different driveways,--
Store-bought Dodge and Ford trucks,
Helping
to keep Michigan alive.

A SMALL POND

Giant birch trees,
swaying in the air,
With brown crispy leaves
catching bits of falling snow,
Icy green water,
moving slowly,
Amongst purple and rusty vines,
Broken branches lie fallen
along the charcoal-brown banks.
Amber bushes
lie in clusters
Around the still pond,
Canadian geese,
with patted-down heads,
Glide silently about the pond,
And, as the snow falls harder,
Little geese
fluff their feathers,
And a million snowflakes
sparkle in the air.

A SWAYING RUBBER TIRE

An abandoned house,
on a sideroad in Michigan,
Lies dead by the side of the road.

A giant birch tree,
with strong-like arms,
Guards,
what used to be.

A long Manila rope
is tied
around an old black tire,
And now, on a snow and windy day,
The old tire
just swings back and forth.

No little laughter,
No cries of "Whee!"
No little boy or girl
hanging on, with all their might,
No mother or dad
looking out from the broken
/kitchen window,
Now,
Just an old birch tree,
and a faded black tire,
swinging back and forth,
All alone,
On a snow and windy day.

INDIANA

AN APRIL CORNFIELD IN INDIANA

Row after row of stiff crispy cornstalks,
Breaking through
a crackly dark brown soil,
Cinder-black hefty cattle,
Grazing in the barren-like field,
Three little pigs, brown and vanilla,
Keeping their distance,
and walking gingerly over the stiff frozen soil,
The temperature
in the low 20's,
and may fall
more,
Misty steam clouds,
Belching out of cinder-black cattle,
The whole scene
looking like the Dakotas,
and yet,
no snow.

A SMALL CAFE IN INDIANA

Homemade apricot pie - the Special of the Day.
Special,
it was.
Friendly farmers
having early morning coffee,
Telling stories.
And the hearty laughter.
---Making the small cafe
a home
for a few moments
during the day.
Then,
its time for me to leave,
And feeling
that you're leaving
your home
In a small cafe.

HORSES STANDING BY THE BARN

A big white barn,
with a green slanting roof,
Standing tall
against a bright Indiana sky.

Three chestnut-brown yearlings,
looking at their phantom shadows,
On an ice-cold windy day.

Fluffy horse hair,
blowing in the wind,
And black shadows,
making ripples
on a white barn
in Indiana.

MAIN STREET IN KENTLAND

Off the sideroad,--
a small town named Kentland;
--Driving down the main street
on a very cold and windy day,
Silent cars
lined up,
in front of the different small shops,
and yet,
no people about.
A silence that couldn't be real.
A quiet old red-brick courthouse,
with a silent greenish cannon on a brown-green
front lawn.
A blue-and-white schoolbus,
no children inside,
Moving silently through town.

Why so silent?
Why no barking dogs?
Why no people moving about?
Maybe,
It's just too cold...

But why,
why,
Why so silent?

ILLINOIS

FRESH BLACK CORNFIELDS

Cultivated fields,
with little black mounds and chunky,
fresh-turned earth,
Stretching as far
as a black crow can see.

Bits of last year's yellow corn crop,
Sticking through,
point to a white-blue sky,
And let you know,---
Big, tall
yellow corn
with stringy whiskers,
Will grow again,
Under
an Illinois
sky.

A CEMETERY IN A CORNFIELD

Row after row of marble slabs
Lie atop rusty-green mounds.
Yellow plastic flowers,
tucked tightly,
Amongst the mounds.

Freshly cultivated rows,
of black chunky earth,
Run along it's sides,
With bits of last year's
yellow corn crop,
Sticking out of the crusty black earth.

Marble slabs
stand still,
As a heavy Illinois wind
blows cornstalks
to and fro,
in a black
cornfield.

IOWA

AN IOWA SCENE

A cream-blue sky
spreading as far
as one can see,
Puffy milk glass clouds,
stopped in flight,
No movement can be seen,
High, high
in deep light-blue space,
Tiny white clouds
are spread like sweetbutter,
Across the sky,

Shades of pink,
And blotches of grey,
Cling,
to puffy white ornaments,
In an Iowa sky.

RED WINDMILL

Tall homemade red windmill,
standing alone
near a blackish cornfield;
Bluish-grey aluminum blades,
turning gently against an
Iowa breeze,
Chips of faded red paint move back and forth,
on the old windmill's
wood frame,
as the wind starts to pick up speed,
Aluminum blades,
slapping the air,
as the wind
moves faster,
A constant hum,
and an occasional creaking,
make the whole thing eerie,
foreboding, --
especially
when nobody is in sight,
Just you,
an old red windmill,
and an empty
black cornfield.

WISCONSIN

CORN CRIB IN WISCONSIN

Fat bird cage,
with an aluminum hat,
and a big rusty wire door,
Big yellow brownish feed corn,
Packed in so tight,
corncobs stick out the sides,
Nearby,
big, shiny jet-black-and-white cows
with full, bulging milk bellies,
are eyeing the full corn crib.
A big hefty Wisconsin man
walks by,
and the hefty cows
know feed time is near.

KITTY BY THE ROAD

Wisconsin black kitty.

Fluffy, icy black hair,
blowing,
On a cold, cold
Wisconsin day.

Turning somersaults,
Sliding
down
crusty, frozen brown earth.

Even when the weather turns colder,
A Wisconsin black kitty,
Still has fun.

HORSES IN WISCONSIN

Cold grey overcast day.
Along the sideroad,
Six frozen stacks of tan-grey hay
hug the frozen black earth.
Chestnut-brown,
grey-white,
sandpaper-brown,
cinder-black horses,
Sitting, standing, and eating
amongst the stacks.
Nipping,
moving back and forth,
shaking strong heads
On a cold Wisconsin day.
Down, down
the temperature drops,
And grey misty steam clouds
blow out of horses' nostrils,
Letting you know,
it's damn cold in Wisconsin.

MINNESOTA

CHRISTMAS SCENE IN APRIL

Under light blue Minnesota skies,
a Christmas white meadow
still is there to see.
Firm, white snow
rolling over valleys and hills.
Frozen yellow weeds
sticking through white puffy mounds,
making a Christmas scene in April
still a good thing.
Maple trees,
hemlock,
and old birch, too,
Stand bare.
But one wonders
what it would be,
If tiny silver and gold
Christmas ornaments
were hanging amongst the trees.

HUNGRY HORSE

A strong, chestnut-brown horse,
at the bottom of a snow-covered hill,
has food in mind,

His fluffy, chestnut-brown coat sparkles,
against a meadow of white.

Up the hill, he slowly moves,--
Strong, brown legs
rising, with step
after step,
White steam,
bursting out of his nostrils,
Dull, grey horseshoes,
crashing into the meadow,
And a million bits of snow explode.

Finally to the top,--
--A yellow haystack.
And left behind,
Frozen deep tracks,
on a Minnesota hill.

NORTH DAKOTA

SMALL TOWN, NORTH DAKOTA

Two-story houses,
looking pleasant outside,
Hefty snow-white lawns,
Long, foggy-white icicles,
hanging like glass ornaments
from the edges of snow-covered
roofs,
Greyish-green birch trees,
standing stiffly amongst friendly
houses,
Empty silver-grey clotheslines,
and no one in sight,--
making it darn clear,
It's cold in North Dakota!

NORTH DAKOTA SNOW

Deep, deep powdered white meadows of snow,
as far as the white eagle
can see.
A faded red and white barn,
plunked down in an arena of snow,
it looking like a child's playhouse
under a snow-white Christmas tree.
And near the barn,
a big, strong
chestnut-brown horse
has been swallowed up
by the deep snow;--
At the mercy
of nature's snow monster,
he stands trapped
between her sides.
But frozen yellow hay,
sitting on top of a snow-white platter,
still lets
a chestnut-brown horse
eat away.

SOUTH DAKOTA

SNOW SEA IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Bumpy white sea,

flowing over meadow after meadow,

Jet black earth,

looking like black foam on a white-snow sea,

Frozen dead branches,

looking like driftwood bobbling in the sea,

Frozen yellow stubs of wheat,

looking like seaweed
in a white-snow sea,

Frosty, shiny, cinder-black cattle,

drifting aimlessly
in a South Dakota sea.

SILVER TREES

Nature's own silver trees.

Tiny white crystals
hugging
frozen bare limbs,

Pure glass ornaments
shining
like a million diamonds,
under
a crystal white sun
in a South Dakota sky.

NEBRASKA

VIEW FROM A NEBRASKA HILL

Rolling black-and-white
valleys,
with rows, running up and down.

A late April snow
makes her mark
against a waiting spring.

Many empty corn-cribs,
looking like abandoned birdcages
in lifeless fields.

Sleeping birch, elm, and a few oak trees, too,
resting peacefully
until spring drops by.

Frizzy tan-brown grass,
waiting for warm summer
moonlight nights.

Lean black-and-white cattle,
eating crispy, frozen tan hay,
But always looking at empty corncribs,
on a cold cold day.

GIANT OAK TREE

A BIG massive trunk,
looking like an alligator's hide.
Giant arms,
stretching out over a
little
corn
field.
Massive roots,
digging deep into black soil.

Black rows of planted corn
go by his sides,--
But never,
through.

He, looking high and mighty!
He, looking strong!

And a black cornfield,
just tiny and small
on a Nebraska
farm.

COLORADO

AN EARLY APRIL DAY

Golden yellow weeds,
with rusty ends,
Standing upright in white snowfields in Colorado,

Chocolate brown-and-white covered mountains,
pushed against a light blue sky,

Frosty amber sagebrush,
stuck against
chocolate-brown-doughnut hills,

A sparkling sun
hanging from a light blue glass sky,
making snow
look like coffee ice-cream
On a darn cold day.

GOLDEN EAGLE OVER COLORADO

High,
high
in a light blue sky,
Long, golden white feathers spread.

Gliding slowly
over a snow-covered valley,
A golden white head
looks for prey,

With glistening black claws,
He's ready
for a kill.

After
a while, down the snow-covered road,
A golden white blur
streaks out of the sky,
and one poor rabbit
takes on flight,
into the sky.

ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Jagged
snow-covered granite,
with dark shadows covering up
a million years of the past,
now,
sleeping peacefully on an April day.

Small brown boulder
mountains,
looking like soft hills
against the mighty Rockies.
And hefty hunchback buffalo
grazing peacefully,
in green and yellow meadows
on a cold, crisp day.

WYOMING

THE WYOMING PRAIRIE

Yellow-brown hills, rolling over Wyoming,
with blotches
of an early April snow,
Tiny amber brush,
sprinkled amongst the golden brown hills,
White porcelain mask cattle
grazing peacefully on a bitter cold April morning.
Misty steam escaping
from petrified cattle,
Low, grey snow clouds,
looking ominous in a dark grey sky.
A China wind
blows smoothly across a Wyoming scene.

Just a matter of time,
And the big blizzard will blow
over
Wyoming.

WAITING FOR NATURE

White snowflakes falling,
looking like wood ash in the wind,

Time, frozen still,
making the pains of impatience run through,

Waiting, waiting,
For nature to give the word, and let you pass,

But nature runs her own clock,
And poor mortals stand still in her time.

What has to be the edge of time,--
nature finally lets you pass,
And you soon find out
that man must be but the shadow
on
Nature's
clock.

MOSES' OIL FIELD

Giant black bugs made from steel,
pumping out shiny black oil

Hour after hour,
day after day,
black bugs doing their thing

Up and down,
turning,
creaking,--
the black bugs pump away.

Even when the big blizzard
dumps chunky white snow in their midst,
the black bugs
just keep
pumping and
pumping
out shiny new oil
in Wyoming.

MONTANA

SLED IN MONTANA

Chestnut-brown horses, with bushy tails blowing in the wind,
pulling an old moon-grey sled
across a deep deep snow-covered field.
Cold grey horseshoes, crashing
into a million bits of snow,
making snowclouds
over a silent snow field.
Shiny brown leather harnesses cutting into horse hair,
as the horses strain harder.
An old man, with snow-white hair and a face made from marble,
sits frozen to the sled,
And with mechanical-like arms held in place,
he guides
strong chestnut-brown horses
over a deep deep snow field in Montana.

WHITE HORSE IN MONTANA

Giant white horse, with traces of yellow-gold,
stands firm in deep snow.

Down, down the temperature drops,
but a horse in Montana
holds his ground.

The biting wind blows across the meadow,
And white horse hair stands erect,
And the white horse still stands firm in the snow.

Heavy heavy snow clouds hang overhead,
and the winds blow harder,
And a big white horse
just looks ahead.

White marble snowflakes,
as big as a silver dollar's head,
crash down,
But a big white horse in Montana
still
holds his ground.

Snow clouds
Pass away,
And a frosty sun lights up the white meadow.

And a white horse from Montana
is found
frozen still
against the ground.

IDAHO

MOUNTAINS IN IDAHO

The snow
fell
and fell
and fell. Valleys
turned into
white mountains.
cattle fence--
looking like tiny stubs of wood
breaking through thick white frosting.
smoky black
prairie brush,
peeking through mounds
of snow.
Evergreens looking short,
white and frosty.
No animals in sight.
Cabins
and barns--
just slanted roofs
sitting on mounds of white snow.
The wind picking up
making higher, and higher drifts.
All
on a cold
Idaho day.

FOOD ON THE RANGE

The big
white horse from Idaho,
with a black fluffy tail and a big black head,
finishes yellow oats
on a cold snowy day.
fluffy white horsehair
blowing in the breeze.
big white hoofs thumping,
and poofing
powder white snow.
a small black crow
sitting in a snow pond not far by,
waiting
for food,
Just hoping the big white horse
will do
what he has
to do.

A PAINTING IN IDAHO

purples,
shades of grey,
light blacks...
all this,
in a gigantic group
of snow-covered mountains.
A sight to behold.
A sight
that's unbelievable.
A sight to treasure.

On the base
of nature's own masterpiece painting,
lies a small dwarf city
Pocatello
bowing down
in front of
Nature's own masterpiece.

UTAH

BLACK CLOUDS HANGING STILL

Black rain
clouds
over Utah.

Black and white
snowtop mountains
against
a light blue ribbon.

Light,
chocolate brown fields,
with blotches of stiff tannish grass,
passing,
by their sides.

Faint yellow
sun rays,
hiding behind a few
candy white mountains.

A small red barn, looking like a child's toy,
in a faraway
field.

All this,
on a cold
April day.

GREAT SALT LAKE

Long blue ribbon,
  gently flowing
  against the tan banks of
                    Utah.
  Brown
    and snow white covered mountains
    looking down on a million
    years of the past.

A light blue sky
  with ghost clouds hanging deep
                              overhead.

  The rising sun
    reflecting shades of pink
          off the blue sea.

  All this---
        on a calm April morning.

NEVADA

DEAD MAN'S PLAIN

Heavy black
and white
raincloudsover Nevada.

Big black and white hills
looking like ancient
Indian burial grounds.

Mile after mile
of tan brown sagebrush.

No houses in sight.

No humans in sight.

Just
desolation.

A few
tiny blades of green grass
looking like exotic
plants from the Mideast
In the barren
barren
stretches of Nevada.

VIRGINIA CITY

Faded town
taken over
by the Modernites.

    Parking lots
    hot dog stands
    souvenirs.

The old town
is
gone.

    Just a few folks
    still feeling love
    for the
    past.

        And the only other things
        left in town
        that are real,
                Are the shells
                of the buildings
                    And a few trinkets
                    of the past.

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OREGON

A GREEN VALLEY IN OREGON

A giant valley lying quiet
at the bottom of nature's own breath-taking
green and purple mountains.

Scattered evergreens sticking out of the valley's floor,
looking like green figures
praying to the stars.

The sleeping little houses
resting in peace.
White and chestnut-brown cattle grazing peacefully
amongst lush green grass.

The whole view,--
A Garden of Eden
in the West.

VENETIAN GREEN HILL

A Venetian green grass hilltop
on a sideroad,
With purple-black cows
with full white bellies
grazing leisurely.

A million hills
all look alike,
A thousand fertile meadows
seem the same,
But ah!
There is only
one
Venetian green hill,
And that
is on a sideroad
in western Oregon.

WASHINGTON

EVERGREEN FARMS

Puffy grey rainclouds hanging overhead
biding their time.

Mile after mile of giant Washington evergreens
waitng patiently to be water fed.
The constant buzzing of blue and silver gas saws
sawing away on ripe trees.

The sounds and the quivering of the ground
as giant evergreens
crash against the chocolate-brown
earth.
The iron yellow caterpillars with frizzy steel wire cables
trailing behind,
pulling tree after tree off the farm.
The never-ending trek of
big
red, blue, and yellow diesel trucks
taking crop after crop of giant evergreens off the farms.
The sight
of tired, big lumberjacks,
with hands made from calluses,
Closing up another day
on an evergreen farm.

Photo by Dorothy L. Coombs

ABOUT THE POET

Mr. Williams is a relative newcomer to the field of poetry. He never wrote a poe until the age of 40, but in these last six years, he has written a total of five book His first book, *Poems of P. E. Williams,* was published in 1973 by Caves Book Ltd., and one other book, *The Crowds Are Waiting,* was printed up for him, i 1975, by a patron of the arts. His two other books, *Warehouse Poems* and *Poem from an Empty Breast,* he is hoping to soon have published. Mr. Williams currently living in San Francisco, where he teache poetry for a free university an is also starting on a new book of poems.

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